

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces and supersedes all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-12 (Cancelled)

13 (Currently Amended) A loop simulation device for determining an image of a knitting fabric corresponding to knitting fabric design data such that a loop of each stitch is represented, the device comprising:

movement amount calculating means for determining a movement amount of the each stitch of the knitting fabric such that distances between the each stitch and upper, lower, left, and right stitches satisfy a predetermined rule and a stitch orientation of the each stitch approximates stitch orientations of left and right stitches when the stitch orientation of the each stitch differs from the stitch orientations of the left and right stitches; and

convergence determining means for repeating processing performed by said movement amount calculating means until a position of the each stitch is converged on a converged value, the converged value being set as a stitch position;

stitch position storage means for storing data for said stitch position and said stitch orientation;

memory for storing the knitting fabric design data; and

display means for displaying the image of the knitted fabric.

14. (Previously Presented) The loop simulation device of claim 13, characterized in that said movement amount calculating means further determines the movement amount of the each stitch such that an angle between the stitch orientation of the each stitch and a direction linking the each stitch to the left and right stitches approximates a right angle.

15. (Currently Amended) The loop simulation device of claim 13, characterized in that the position of the each stitch including a position in a parallel plane to the knitting fabric and a position in a perpendicular direction to the knitting fabric is determined, and

said movement amount calculating means determines, for the each stitch, a movement amount in said perpendicular direction such that:

the each stitch is not moved in said perpendicular direction when the each stitch is the same stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, as the stitch types of the upper, lower, left, and right stitches; and

the each stitch is moved in said perpendicular direction when the each stitch is a different stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, from at least one of the stitch types of the upper, lower, left, and right stitches.

16. (Currently Amended) The loop simulation device of claim 13, characterized in that the position of the each stitch including a position in a parallel plane to the knitting fabric and a position in a perpendicular direction to the knitting fabric is determined, and a vertical size of the each stitch is determined, and that

said movement amount calculating means determines, for the each stitch, a movement amount of the each stitch in said parallel plane such that:

when the each stitch is the same stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, as the stitch types of the upper and lower stitches, the vertical size of the each stitch corresponds to a distance between the upper and lower stitches in said parallel plane; and

when the each stitch is a different stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, from at least one of the stitch types of the upper and lower stitches, the each stitch is moved in said perpendicular direction, whereby a knit stitch burrows beneath a purl stitch, and the distance between the upper and lower stitches in said parallel plane decreases below said vertical size in accordance with an amount of the each stitch movement in said perpendicular direction.

17. (Currently Amended) The loop simulation device of claim 13, characterized in that the position of the each stitch including a position in a parallel plane to the knitting fabric and a position in a perpendicular direction to the knitting fabric is determined, and a horizontal size of the each stitch is determined, and

said movement amount calculating means determines, for the each stitch, a movement amount of the each stitch in the parallel plane to the knitting fabric such that:

when the each stitch is the same stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, as the stitch types of the left and right stitches, the horizontal size of the each stitch corresponds to a distance between the left and right stitches in said parallel plane, and

when the each stitch is a different stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, from at least one of the stitch types of the left and right stitches, the each stitch is moved in the perpendicular direction, whereby a purl stitch burrows beneath a knit stitch, and the distance between said left and right stitches in said parallel plane decreases below the horizontal size of the each stitch in accordance with an amount of the each stitch movement in the perpendicular direction.

18. (Currently Amended) The loop simulation device of claim 13, further comprising:
means for determining an initial value of the position of the each stitch such that a distribution of the position of the each stitch does not deviate from a grid form,
wherein the processing of said movement amount calculating means begins from said initial value.

19. (Previously Presented) A loop simulation method for determining and displaying an image of a knitting fabric corresponding to knitting fabric design data such that a loop of each stitch is represented, the method comprising the steps of:

moving each stitch of the knitting fabric such that distances between the each stitch and upper, lower, left, and right stitches satisfy a predetermined rule and a stitch orientation of the each stitch approximates stitch orientations of left and right stitches when the stitch orientation of the each stitch differs from the stitch orientations of the left and right stitches;

repeating the movement of the each stitch until a position of the each stitch is converged on a converged value; and

displaying the each stitch arranged in the converged value being set as a stitch position.

20. (Previously Presented) The loop simulation method of claim 19, characterized in that during the movement of the each stitch, the each stitch is further moved such that an angle between the stitch orientation of the each stitch and a direction linking the each stitch to the left and right stitches approximates a right angle.

21. (Previously Presented) The loop simulation method of claim 19, further comprising the steps of:

determining the position of the each stitch including a position in a parallel plane to the knitting fabric and a position in a perpendicular direction to the knitting fabric;

not moving the each stitch in the perpendicular direction to the knitting fabric when the each stitch is the same stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, as the stitch types of the upper, lower, left, and right stitches; and

moving the each stitch in said perpendicular direction when the each stitch is a different stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, from at least one of the stitch types of the upper, lower, left, and right stitches.

22. (Currently amended) A ~~loop simulation program~~ computer-readable medium storing computer-executable instructions for determining and displaying an image of a knitting fabric corresponding to knitting fabric design data such that a loop of each stitch is represented, ~~the program~~ by performing operations comprising:

a command for moving the each stitch of the knitting fabric such that distances between the each stitch and upper, lower, left, and right stitches satisfy a predetermined rule and a stitch orientation of the each stitch approximates stitch orientations of left and right stitches when the stitch orientation of the each stitch differs from the stitch orientations of the left and right stitches;

a command for repeating the movement of the each stitch until a position of the each stitch is converged on a converged value; and

a command for displaying the each stitch arranged in the converged value being set as a stitch position.

23. (Currently amended) The computer-readable medium ~~loop simulation program~~ of claim 22, characterized in that in said command for moving the each stitch, the each stitch is further moved such that an angle between the stitch orientation of the each stitch and a direction linking the each stitch to the left and right stitches approximates a right angle.

24. (Currently amended) The computer-readable medium ~~loop simulation program~~ of claim 22, characterized in that the position of the each stitch including a position in a parallel plane to the knitting fabric and a position in a perpendicular direction to the knitting fabric is determined, and

in said command for moving the each stitch, the each stitch is not moved in said perpendicular direction when the each stitch is the same stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, as the stitch types of the upper, lower, left, and right stitches, and the each

stitch is moved in said perpendicular direction when the each stitch is a different stitch type, a knit stitch or a purl stitch, from at least one of the stitch types of the upper, lower, left, and right stitches.